**Notetaking/Summarizing Strategies**

**Youth today, with the convenience of the computer, can easily cut and paste information when they are researching. However, plaigarism is still illegal and every educational institution and teacher has access to plaigarism checkers and can identify it easily. So, the skill of proper note-taking is still essential.**  
**Here is a link to some notetaking tips.**

One strategy for improving reading comprehension is to write summaries. Summaries function to reduce the amount of information to be remembered and to organize the information in a way that aids understanding and remembering. Four rules of summary writing are as follows.

* Collapse lists.
  + If you see a list of things, try to think of a word or phrase as a name for the whole list.
  + For example, if you saw a list like eyes, ears, neck, arms and legs, you could substitute 'body parts.' Or if you saw a list like ice skating, skiing and sledding, you could use 'winter sports.'
* Use topic sentences.
  + Often authors write a sentence that summarizes a whole paragraph. It is called a topic sentence or a main idea.
  + If the author gives you one, you can use it in your summary.
  + Some paragraphs do not have explicit topic sentences or main ideas. You may have to invent one for your summary.
* Get rid of unnecessary detail.
  + Some text information can be repeated in a passage. The same thing can be said in a number of different ways, all in the same passage.
  + Other text information can be unimportant or trivial.
  + Since summaries are meant to be short, you should delete trivia and redundancies.
* Collapse paragraphs.
  + Paragraphs are often related to one another.
  + Some paragraphs explain one or more other paragraphs. Other paragraphs just expand on information presented in previous paragraphs. Some are more necessary or important than others.
  + Decide which paragraphs should be kept, which can be deleted and which can be joined with others.

Five steps of summary writing are provided below.

1. Make sure you understand the text.
   * Ask yourself, 'What was this text about?' and 'What did the author say?'
   * Try to say the general theme to yourself before you begin to summarize the text.
2. Look back.
   * Reread the text to make sure you got the general theme right.
   * Also reread to make certain that you really understand what the important parts of the text are.
   * Star or mark the important parts of the text.
   * Now use the four specific rules for writing a summary.
3. Rethink.
   * Reread a paragraph of the text.
   * Try to say the theme of that paragraph to yourself.
   * Is the theme a topic sentence? (Main idea?) Have you marked it?
   * Or is the topic sentence missing? If it is missing, have you written one, in the margin, for example?
4. Check and double check.
   * Did you leave in any lists? Make sure you don't list things out in your summary.
   * Did you repeat yourself? Make sure you didn't.
   * Did you skip anything important?
5. Polish the summary.
   * When a lot of information is reduced from an original passage, the resulting concentrated information often sounds very unnatural. Fix this problem and create a more natural- sounding summary.
   * Adjustments may include but are not limited to: paraphrasing, insertion of connecting words like 'and' or 'because,' and the insertion of introductory or closing statements.
   * Paraphrasing is especially useful here, for two reasons: It improves your ability to remember the material and it avoids using the author's words, otherwise known as plagiarism

**In other words:**  
**1. Use point form**  
**2. Use only 1-5 words in each point**  
**3. Read one paragraph at a time**  
**4. At the end of each paragraph, stop and reflect about what the main idea of that paragraph was. Usually it is stated clearly in the topic sentence. Put the main idea in a short point form phrase**  
**5. Go on to the next paragraph, and each one after, until you are done. You should only have 1 point per paragraph, unless there is something really, really important.**  
**6. Close your book, internet, or whatever your source is.**  
**7. Using only your own notes, put them back into sentences without looking back at your source.**  
  
There are lots of note-taking shorthand symbols, sort of standardized, but you can make up your own, too, as long as you remember them. Here's just one link to a sheet of shorthand symbols:  
[Shorthand symbols](http://www.port.ac.uk/departments/studentsupport/ask/resources/handouts/referencingandcitation/filetodownload,75420,en.pdf)  
<http://www.port.ac.uk/departments/studentsupport/ask/resources/handouts/referencingandcitation/filetodownload,75420,en.pdf>   
  
  
An example of proper note-taking is below:  
  
[YESS Youth Shelter Organization](http://www.yess.org/#about_2)  
  
Here is the first page of their "Need Help?" section called "Shelter Program". Below it, are the notes I would take from their information and below that is a new paragraph in my own words to cover their main points.

**‍Shelter Program**

When a young person comes through our doors, our first concern is for their immediate well-being. Do they have a place to sleep that night? Are they hungry? If it’s raining, snowing, or thirty below, do they have warm clothes? What about some clean socks and a shower?  
These issues are addressed through our Overnight Shelter program. Youth can access the Shelter Program one night at a time. We make sure they’re safe, warm, and have a hot meal. In the morning, they have access to showers, clean clothes, and breakfast. When they leave, they have a bagged lunch and a bus ticket, if necessary, to help them get to school or other appointments. We also provide transportation for kids who want to spend the day at the [Armoury Youth Centre](http://yess.org/need-help/armoury-youth-centre).  
Of course, these are just the basics of the program. Staff assess each youth’s circumstances and needs. They may make referrals to other programs, or contact Human Services if necessary. The important thing is to get them off the street for the night—and get them talking. There are resources for youth in Edmonton, and we help our kids find them.  
It’s important to understand, though, that we don’t force anyone to do anything. The desire to make changes in their lives has to come from the kids themselves. We’re here for them, and we offer a safe, supportive place filled with people who want to help. All these young people need to do is ask.  
**Facts and Stats:**

* Program offers 18 beds on a first-come, first-served basis
* Designed for youth aged 15 to 18, inclusive
* Intakes begin at 9 pm, 365 days a year
* Wake-up time is 6:45 am, all youth leave for the day by 9 am
* Intakes are for one night only, but youth can return as often as they need to
* Youth can lock up their belongings for the night (personal items are not stored on long-term basis)
* Over 500 youth access the shelter every year (some only for a night or two, others consistently)

**My notes on the above information:**

* overnight
* cleaned and fed
* lunch and transportation
* referrals to other programs
* don't force change
* supportive
* 15-18 years old
* 9 pm-9am
* safe and secure

**My informational paragraph (summary) that I will use in my advertisement:**  
Yess is a safe and secure overnight shelter for youth ages 15-18. It is open from 9pm to 9am. While there, you will be fed and able to shower and wash clothes. You also have someone to talk to who won't force you to change but will be supportive and refer you to other programs that might help. On your way out in the morning you will be given a bag lunch and transportation to where you want to go.  
  
Your turn:  
**Assignment #1**

View this video on youtube: [Can You Spare a Dime? Depression era video](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eih67rlGNhU)

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Think about what it would be like to be homeless? Do you know anyone who is homeless? Or very poor? What do you think their days and nights are like? Could you do it? Do you know that since the recession in 2008 to the present, many families that were previously middle class, like much of Flin Flon, became homeless, living out of their cars? This is not just a thing of the past. It is happening now, even in Flin Flon.

**Can You Spare a Home p. 69-72**  
p. 69-71 Read, and do the questions #1 and #2 on p. 69  
p. 72 Part A #1, 2 /8  
p. 72 Part B /15 Be sure to actually research an organization, take your own notes, and remember what makes an effective advertisement. It could be for an organization that helps street kids in Flin Flon, Winnipeg, anywhere else. You are not allowed to just copy and paste information from the organization’s website. You must use their website to take notes, which will be handed in with your ad.

**Take notes properly, as this is the focus of this lesson. Then create an advertisement by summarizing your notes. Be sure to include the organization's contact information. You MUST include the notes that you took, when you hand in your final copy.**

**Can You Spare a Home- Original Advertisement Rubric**  
/2 bold image  
/2 bright or appropriate colours for message/audience/mood  
/2 no/little white space  
/2 text- size and font, not too much  
/5 information- main points only, not plagiarized, contact information  
/1 effort into design and appeal for audience  
/1 conventions (spelling, etc.)  
Total /15